What is claimed is:

1. A multiple access communication method for a base station that transmits a downlink channel containing a USF for uplink channel assignment, wherein when a shifted USF operation is used, a first assigned USF, which indicates a mobile station to start uplink transmission from a first uplink channel, is transmitted on a second downlink channel.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein when the shifted USF operation is not used, a second assigned USF, which indicates a mobile station to start uplink transmission from a second uplink channel, is transmitted on a second downlink channel.

3. The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein a value of the first assigned USF is different from a value of the second assigned USF.

4. The method according to one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the first assigned USF indicates the mobile station to transmit at the first and all consecutive uplink channels allocated for uplink transmission.

5. The method according to one of claims 1 to 4, wherein when the shifted USF operation is not used, a nth (n being an integer) assigned USF, which indicates the mobile station to start uplink

transmission from a nth uplink channel, is transmitted on a nth downlink channel.

6. The method according to one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the nth assigned USF indicates the mobile station to start uplink transmission from the nth uplink channel of a next frame or a consecutive group of frames.

7. The method according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the nth assigned USF indicates the mobile station to transmit at the nth uplink channel and all consecutive uplink channels allocated for uplink transmission.

8. The method according to one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the number of downlink channels in one frame is 8 and the number of uplink channels in one frame is 8.

9. The method according to one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the first uplink channel is delayed by three or approximately three time slots with respect to the corresponding downlink channel.

10. The method according to claims 1 to 9, wherein the mobile station performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for reception before receiving the downlink channel.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein the time needed

for performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for reception is three slots.

12. The method according to claim 10, wherein the time needed for performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for reception is one slot.

13. The method according to claim 10, wherein the time needed for performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for reception is one slot and 31 symbol periods.

14. The method according to claims 1 to 9, further comprising the step of performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for transmission before transmitting the downlink channel,

wherein the time needed for performing adjacent cell signal level measurement and preparation for transmission is one slot.

15. The method according to claim 11, wherein the sifted USF operation is used when three channels are allocated for uplink transmission in a frame.

16. The method according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the sifted USF operation is used when five channels are allocated for uplink transmission in a frame.

17. The method according to claim 14, wherein the sifted USF operation is used when six channels are allocated for uplink transmission in a frame.

18. The method according to one of claims 15 to 17, wherein the usage of the shifted USF operation is automatic.

19. The method according to one of claims 1 to 18, wherein the number of multislot class is any one of the multislot classes 7, 34, 39 and 45.

20. A base station apparatus for multiple access communication comprising a transmission section that transmits a downlink channel containing a USF for uplink channel assignment, wherein when a shifted USF operation is used, a first assigned USF, which indicates a mobile station to start uplink transmission from a first uplink channel, is transmitted on a second downlink channel.

21. The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein when the shifted USF operation is not used, a second assigned USF, which indicates a mobile station to start uplink transmission from a second uplink channel, is transmitted on a second downlink channel.

22. The apparatus according to claim 20 or 21, wherein a value of the first assigned USF is different from a value of the second

assigned USF.

23. The apparatus according to one of claims 20 to 22, wherein the first assigned USF indicates the mobile station to transmit at the first and all consecutive uplink channels allocated for uplink transmission.

24. The apparatus according to one of claims 20 to 23, wherein when the shifted USF operation is not used, a nth (n being an integer) assigned USF, which indicates the mobile station to start uplink transmission from a nth uplink channel, is transmitted on a nth downlink channel.

25. The apparatus according to one of claims 20 to 24, wherein the nth assigned USF indicates the mobile station to start uplink transmission from the nth uplink channel of a next frame or a consecutive group of frames.

26. The apparatus according to claim 24 or 25, wherein the nth assigned USF indicates the mobile station to transmit at the nth uplink channel and all consecutive uplink channels allocated for uplink transmission.